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OPERATIONAL ACTIVITIES FOR DEVELOPMENT

Report of the Second Committee

Rapporteur: Mr. Walter BALZAN (Malta)

I. INTRODUCTION

1. At its 3rd plenary meeting, on 18 September 1992, the General Assembly, on the recommendation of the General Committee, decided to include in the agenda of its forty-seventh session the item entitled:

"Operational activities for development:

"(a) Operational activities of the United Nations system;

"(b) United Nations Development Programme;

"(c) United Nations Population Fund;

"(d) United Nations Children's Fund;

"(e) World Food Programme"

and to allocate it to the Second Committee.

2. The Committee considered the item at its 21st to 24th, 36th, 38th, 48th and 51st meetings, from 26 to 28 October, on 11 and 12 November and on 7 and 16 December 1992. An account of the Committee's consideration of the item is contained in the relevant summary records (A/C.2/47/SR.21-24, 36, 38, 48 and 51). Attention is also drawn to the general debate held by the Committee at its 3rd to 9th meetings, from 5 to 8 October (see A/C.2/47/SR.3-9).

3. For its consideration of the item, the Committee had before it the following documents:

(a) Report of the Economic and Social Council, chapter IV (A/47/3); 1/

(b) Report of the Secretary-General on the implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children (A/47/264-E/1992/71);

(c) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, which was also before the General Assembly under item 94 (A/47/340);

(d) Note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system (A/47/419 and Add.1-3);

(e) Report of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme; 2/

(f) Report of the Executive Board of the United Nations Children's Fund (E/1992/29); 3/

(g) Letter dated 2 July 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Senegal to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the position paper on the new world order prepared by the Summit Level Group for South-South Consultation and Cooperation (A/47/312-S/24238);

(h) Letter dated 11 August 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Germany to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the final documents of the Munich Economic Summit, held from 6 to 8 July 1992 (A/47/375-S/24429);

(i) Letter dated 17 August 1992 from the Chargé d'affaires a.i. of the Permanent Mission of Solomon Islands to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Final Communiqué of the Twenty-third South Pacific Forum, held at Honiara on 8 and 9 July 1992 (A/47/391);

1/ To be issued in final form as Official Records of the General Assembly, Forty-seventh Session, Supplement No. 3 (A/47/3/Rev.1).

2/ Official records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 8.

3/ Ibid., Supplement No. 9.

(j) Letter dated 2 October 1992 from the Permanent Representative of Pakistan to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General, transmitting the Declaration of the Ministers for Foreign Affairs of the States members of the Group of 77, adopted on 1 October 1992 at their sixteenth annual meeting, held at United Nations Headquarters (A/47/499);

(k) Letter dated 25 August 1992 from the Permanent Representative of China to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General (A/47/564);

4. At the 21st meeting, on 26 October, introductory statements were made by the Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Development, the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme, the Executive Director of the United Nations Children's Fund, the Deputy Executive Director of the United Nations Population Fund and the Director of the New York Office of the World Food Programme (see A/C.2/47/SR.21).

II. CONSIDERATION OF PROPOSALS

A. Draft resolutions A/C.2/47/L.21, L.22 and L.92

5. At the 36th meeting, on 11 November, the representative of Colombia, on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77 and China, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Triennial policy review of the operational activities of the United Nations development system" (A/C.2/47/L.21), which read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Reaffirming its resolution 44/211 of 22 December 1989,

"Concerned that the full and coordinated implementation of that resolution has not been achieved by the United Nations system,

"Reaffirming also the need to implement all the elements contained in the resolution in a coherent manner, keeping in mind their interlinkages,

"Urging developed countries, in particular those countries whose overall performance is not commensurate with their capacity, taking into account established official development assistance targets, including targets established at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and present levels of contribution, to substantially increase their official development assistance, including contributions to the operational activities of the United Nations system,

"Stressing that national plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

"Stressing further that the fundamental characteristic of the operational activities of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, neutrality and multilateralism, and the ability to respond to the needs of the developing countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities of the United Nations system are carried out for the benefit of the developing countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

"Reaffirming further that the United Nations development system has a critical and unique role to play in enabling developing countries to take a lead role in the management of their own development process,

"Stressing also that in order to achieve the above objective, processes and procedures of the United Nations system should be streamlined and rationalized, especially in the interrelated areas of programming, execution, decentralization, monitoring and evaluation, thus making the United Nations system more relevant and responsive to the national plans, priorities and objectives of developing countries, and more efficient in its delivery systems,

"1. Takes note of the note by the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system; 4/

"2. Stresses the need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries;

"3. Decides that, in the context of the administrative reform of the United Nations Secretariat and the restructuring and revitalization of the intergovernmental process, the mandates of the separate sectoral and specialized entities, funds, programmes and specialized agencies should not be affected;

"National execution

"4. Takes note of decision 92/22 of 26 May 1992 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme, in particular the definition of the programme/project execution and implementation concepts; 5/

4/ A/47/419 and Add.1-3.

5/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 8 (E/1992/28), annex I.

"5. Requests the Economic and Social Council to assess the guidelines formulated by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the United Nations Development Programme on national execution and to evaluate whether effective and coordinated actions are taken on the matter by the United Nations development system;

"6. Reiterates that national execution should be the norm for programmes and projects funded by the United Nations system, taking into account the needs and capacities of developing countries;

"7. Recognizes the important role of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system in facilitating the necessary technical and substantive expertise for United Nations-funded programmes and projects;

"8. Stresses the urgent need for the United Nations system to give priority to assisting developing countries in building the necessary capacity to undertake national execution, including the funding and provision of support services, as required, at the field level;

"Programme approach

"9. Takes note of decision 92/23 of 26 May 1992 of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme; 5/

"10. Requests the Economic and Social Council to assess the guidelines formulated by the Administrative Committee on Coordination and the United Nations Development Programme on programme approach and to evaluate whether effective and coordinated actions are taken on this matter by the United Nations development system;

"11. Emphasizes that the recipient Government has the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations, in order to effectively integrate the assistance into its development process;

"12. Reaffirms that the multisectoral, sectoral or subsectoral strategies prepared by the developing countries, on the basis of priorities identified by them, should provide the programme framework for all external assistance, in a coherent and coordinated manner;

"13. Reaffirms that the funding organizations of the United Nations system - the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development - funds administered by the United Nations Development Programme and trust funds of specialized agencies should harmonize their cycles to become consistent with national budget cycles, plans and strategies;

"14. Stresses that in order to ensure the effective integration of assistance provided by the United Nations system in the development process of countries, with enhanced accountability, and to facilitate the assessment and evaluation of the impact and sustainability of that assistance, the following framework is necessary:

"(a) A country strategy note, as an overall national programme framework of United Nations assistance for operational activities for development, should be prepared by interested recipient Governments in accordance with their development plans and priorities, with the assistance of the United Nations system, if requested by the recipient Governments;

"(b) The specific activities of each funding agency, within the broad framework of the country strategy note, should be outlined in a specific country programme prepared by the recipient Government with the assistance of the funding agencies;

"(c) The country strategy note should be transmitted to the governing body of each funding agency as a reference in order to provide the national programme framework within which the specific country programme should be considered;

"15. Decides that assistance should be based on an agreed division of responsibility among the funding agencies, under the coordination of the Government, in order to integrate their response into the development needs of recipient countries;

"Decentralization

"16. Decides that programme development and component approval should be further decentralized to the field offices, providing them with the necessary technical and substantive expertise, and in this context, all funding agency representatives should have equal and uniform decentralized authority for programme development, cancelling, modifying and adding activities within the agreed overall strategy goals, as well as shifting resources within the budget lines of individual components and among the components of a strategy without constant referral to headquarters and with the approval of national authorities;

"17. Stresses that procurement of expertise and equipment and placing of fellowships should be decentralized to the country level to avoid delays and reflect national needs, with due regard to the principles of international competitive bidding while acknowledging the commitment to increase procurement from developing countries substantially and the need for effective accountability mechanisms;

"18. Stresses further that the United Nations system should use, to the fullest extent possible, available national expertise and indigenous technologies;

"Resident coordinator

"19. Stresses that the strengthened function of the resident coordinator is necessary to assist the Government in mobilizing technical expertise from both inside and outside the United Nations system in order to respond to national needs and priorities in the most cost-effective manner;

"20. Stresses further that in order to achieve the above objective, the background of the resident coordinator should include, inter alia, experience to enable him/her to perceive how individual components and strategies can be integrated into the overall development process of the country;

"21. Emphasizes that an effectively functioning resident coordinator system will be dependent on a number of factors, including the following:

"(a) Additional bureaucratic layers should be avoided;

"(b) Matters relating to development, and where appropriate, humanitarian assistance should be dealt with;

"(c) The United Nations system at the country level should be structured and composed in such a way that it corresponds to ongoing and projected cooperation programmes rather than to the institutional structure of the United Nations;

"(d) The separate identities and representation of funds and programmes should be maintained in accordance with their mandates as laid down by their governing bodies;

"(e) Appropriate field structures, as decided by the recipient Government, should be established;

"Reporting, auditing and evaluation

"22. Stresses that all formats, rules and procedures and periodicity of reports should be simplified and harmonized to promote national capacity-building, to assist the Government to integrate external assistance from different sources into its development process;

"23. Stresses further that common formats, rules and procedures are critical to meet the requirements of the shift to a programme approach;

"24. Decides that financial and programme auditing capacity and accounting systems of recipient Governments should be strengthened, with assistance from the United Nations system, as requested by Governments;

"25. Decides further that formats designed for programme and component development, monitoring and evaluation should take into account interrelated and cross-sectoral linkages between individual strategies and between the individual components of a strategy;

"26. Decides that the operationalization of the programme approach requires that budgeting and related rules, procedures, processes and formats should be redefined to become output-, impact- or performance-oriented rather than input- or supply-oriented; evaluation and monitoring systems should be reoriented accordingly, while also strengthening the use of evaluation and monitoring findings, thereby creating a feedback system; and, in this context, calls upon the funding organizations of the United Nations system to develop new methodologies in the above areas and to submit proposals to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993;

"Training

"27. Emphasizes the necessity of developing common system-wide training programmes for the staff of United Nations system field offices, as well as government officials at the country level, to facilitate the shift from the project-by-project to the programme approach and to promote innovative execution modalities; these training programmes should be held on a continuous basis as an integral function of the United Nations system field office structure and should aim to develop national capacities, especially in the areas of programme accountability and financial audit, evaluation and monitoring; training should also take into account the use of regional cooperation arrangements;

"28. Requests the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its session in 1993, to consider the contribution of the operational activities of the United Nations system to the enhancement of the national capacities of developing countries in the field of science and technology, and to make appropriate recommendations thereon, bearing in mind the note by the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system; 6/

"29. Requests the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme to closely monitor and review in 1993 the implementation of the successor support cost arrangements, with particular regard to the provisions of paragraph 25 of resolution 44/211, taking account of related discussions and reviews of agencies and other concerned organizations, including inter-agency forums such as the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities);

6/ A/47/419/Add.1.

"30. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, in the context of the triennial policy review, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution and to make appropriate recommendations;

"31. Requests the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993 to follow up the full implementation of the present resolution."

6. At the 38th meeting, on 12 November, the representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, on behalf also of Austria, Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain, introduced a draft resolution entitled "Triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system" (A/C.2/47/L.22). In introducing the draft resolution, the representative announced that Finland was not a sponsor of the draft. The draft resolution read as follows:

"The General Assembly,

"Recalling its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and 46/219 of 20 December 1991, and other relevant resolutions,

"Noting with concern that while some progress has been made in implementing parts of its resolution 44/211, both by individual organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by coordination mechanisms of the system, many of the principles contained in that resolution have still to be implemented,

"Emphasizing the importance it attaches to a more integrated and unified approach by the United Nations system to the needs of recipient countries, particularly at the field level,

"1. Takes note of the note by the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system; 7/

"2. Reaffirms its resolution 44/211 and stresses the need to implement all the elements of that resolution;

"3. Reiterates the need for priority allocation of resources to projects and programmes in low-income countries, particularly the least developed countries;

"4. Requests the Secretary-General, in close consultation with the Administrative Committee on Coordination, urgently to review the resident coordinator system with the aim of:

7/ A/47/419 and Add.1-3.

"(a) Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system at the field level, in particular by encouraging a more integrated and unified approach to the needs of recipient countries under the leadership of the United Nations representative/resident coordinator, and by making maximum use of the comparative advantages of individual specialized agencies and funds;

"(b) Separating the post of United Nations representative/resident coordinator from that of resident representative of individual funds and specialized agencies in recipient countries, except those where the scale of the activities of the United Nations and the number of funds and agencies represented do not justify the creation of a separate United Nations representative/resident coordinator;

"(c) Widening the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as United Nations representatives/resident coordinators, and increasing involvement in the selection process and the provision of resident coordinators to the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and, in due course, to all funds and specialized agencies with field operations;

"(d) Encouraging individual specialized agencies to participate fully in all aspects of the United Nations representative/resident coordinator system, including its funding, as soon as possible;

"(e) Establishing clear criteria for the selection of United Nations representatives/resident coordinators that should reflect the paramount importance of quality and the need for relevant wide development experience and managerial skills, and include a proven commitment to and aptitude for developing an integrated approach by the United Nations system as a whole;

"(f) Ensuring broader-based funding, within existing resources, from the participants in the United Nations representative/resident coordinator system, to meet its costs, including the provision of the necessary support for United Nations representatives/resident coordinators in all recipient countries;

"(g) Establishing clear lines of authority and a clear division of responsibilities among the Secretary-General, the United Nations representative/resident coordinator and individual funds and specialized agencies, so that the representatives of the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy at the field level and, in due course, of all funds and specialized agencies with field operations, will report to their headquarters through the United Nations representative/resident coordinator on major policy issues including their country programme, the formulation of major projects and programmes and serious problems arising from the implementation of such projects and programmes, in the context of the common country strategy;

"(h) Strengthening the responsibility of the Administrative Committee on Coordination for providing clear guidance to United Nations representatives/resident coordinators and for ensuring that they are provided with the necessary support both at the headquarters level and in the field;

"(i) Enhancing the responsibility of United Nations representatives/resident coordinators for the planning and coordination of programmes by giving them the necessary authority over the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policy and, in due course, over all funds and specialized agencies with field operations to formulate and ensure the implementation of a United Nations common country strategy at the field level including the power to recommend to the Joint Consultative Group on Policy or the Administrative Committee on Coordination or, if required, to governing bodies, the amendment of country programmes and major projects and programmes, where necessary, to bring these into line with such a strategy;

"(j) Ensuring that in accordance with its resolution 46/182, annex, paragraph 39, United Nations representatives/resident coordinators normally coordinate the humanitarian assistance of the United Nations system at the country level, and have responsibility for facilitating all aspects of operations along the relief-to-development continuum;

"5. Welcomes the agreement reached in the Administrative Committee on Coordination on a common country strategy for the United Nations system and requests the Secretary-General to take the necessary steps to facilitate its implementation as early as possible, inter alia, by producing guidelines for country strategy notes and making the analytic and research capacities of the United Nations system available to country-level operational activities;

"6. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the activities of the United Nations system carried out in the Baltic States and the Commonwealth of Independent States are undertaken from the outset on the basis of an integrated and unified approach to, and presence in, the countries concerned;

"7. Also requests the Secretary-General to accelerate work in the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies on a common system-wide interpretation of the programme approach, with the aim of providing improved support for national programmes;

"8. Reiterates its view that the national execution modality should be the norm for projects and programmes funded by the United Nations system, taking into account the needs and capacities of developing countries;

"9. Requests the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement in the Administrative Committee on Coordination and its subsidiary bodies on a common system-wide interpretation of national execution;

"10. Stresses the urgent need for the United Nations system to give priority to assisting developing countries in building the capacity necessary to undertake national execution;

"11. Also stresses the need for the United Nations system to strengthen its capacity to provide upstream support, such as policy advice, at the request of recipient countries;

"12. Requests the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to give priority to simplifying, harmonizing and increasing the transparency of their procedures relating to project formulation, appraisal, monitoring and evaluation, taking into account the need to focus on the impact and sustainability of projects and programmes, and to reach agreement on a common United Nations system-wide manual for such procedures by 1 July 1994;

"13. Also requests the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to decentralize capacity and authority to the country level to the maximum extent possible in order to enhance the coherence of programming and resource utilization and, in particular, to ensure that by 1 July 1994 all relevant bodies of the United Nations system devolve a broadly similar level of project approval and amendment authority to the field, and streamline relevant headquarters structures and procedures;

"14. Further requests the members of the Administrative Committee on Coordination to put in place by 1 July 1994 measures to enhance accountability at the field level, including effective common United Nations programme monitoring, evaluation and management audit systems, which will make possible an accurate assessment of the efficiency, impact and sustainability of projects and programmes and which should focus on results rather than on input;

"15. Urges the United Nations system to adopt a more innovative and integrated approach to training, both at Headquarters and in the field, involving, inter alia, the development of both joint and common training programmes, the establishment of a training capacity internal to each country and a scheme for the training of trainers, which should draw on examples of good practice from individual bodies of the United Nations system and give priority to training in the areas of the programme approach, national execution, support costs, national monitoring capacity, auditing and financial reporting;

"16. Also urges the United Nations system to focus on ways of establishing and maintaining national institutional expertise, particularly in the areas mentioned in paragraph 15 above, inter alia, through the increased participation of national staff and members of relevant national institutions in training programmes;

"17. Welcomes the decision of the Consultative Committee on Substantive Questions (Operational Activities) to set a target for increasing the number of common premises, while emphasizing that this should be achieved in a way that increases efficiency and does not increase the costs for the United Nations system or for developing countries;

"18. Requests the Administrative Committee on Coordination to take further steps to harmonize and adapt the programme cycles of the funding agencies of the United Nations system to programme periods of national Governments;

"19. Reaffirms the importance of human development and, in particular, the need for the United Nations system to carry out a comprehensive assessment of the extent to which its activities are concentrated in sectors vital for human development, such as the participation of people in the development process, and urges the United Nations system, in close cooperation with developing countries, to increase its support for those sectors;

"20. Stresses the need to take into account the importance of human development, including human resources development, and the need to promote good governance and participatory development at all levels in devising and implementing national development plans and strategies;

"21. Invites the governing bodies of each specialized agency and fund to take appropriate action to ensure the full implementation of the present resolution;

"22. Requests each specialized agency and fund to report to its governing body, on an annual basis and in clear terms, on the extent to which it has implemented General Assembly resolution 44/211 and the present resolution and, in particular, on:

"(a) Its contribution to the implementation of the United Nations common country strategy and the programme approach;

"(b) The extent to which staff deployment and approval authority have been decentralized to country offices;

"(c) The extent to which appropriate authority has been transferred to the United Nations representative/resident coordinator by those funds and specialized agencies without extensive field representation;

"(d) The measures it has taken to enhance accountability at the field level, including those relating to monitoring and evaluation;

"(e) The measures it has taken to adapt its operations to meet the changing role that will result from national execution;

"(f) The extent to which it has improved the quantity and quality of training;

"(g) The extent to which its projects and programmes and other activities reflect human development priorities;

"23. Invites the governing bodies of each specialized agency and fund, on an annual basis, to take appropriate action on the report produced in accordance with paragraph 22 above;

"24. Requests the Secretary-General to submit a short report on operational activities, including an account of the strategy that has been adopted to ensure the full implementation of the present resolution and the targets to monitor progress, to the General Assembly at its forty-eighth session."

7. At its 51st meeting, on 16 December, the Committee had before it a draft resolution entitled "Triennial policy review of the operational activities of the United Nations development system" (A/C.2/47/L.92), submitted by the Vice-Chairman of the Committee, Miss Maymouna Diop (Senegal), on the basis of informal consultations held on draft resolutions A/C.2/47/L.21 and L.22.

8. The Secretary of the Committee made an oral correction to operative paragraph 54, replacing the words "in paragraph 53" by the words "in paragraph 51", and read out a statement of the programme budget implications of draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.92.

9. The representative of the Netherlands also orally corrected the text as follows:

(a) In the first preambular paragraph, the word "Reaffirming" was replaced by the word "Recalling";

(b) In operative paragraph 7, the word "the" was added before the words "primary responsibility".

10. The representative of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland made an editorial correction to the English text of the fourth preambular paragraph.

11. Statements were also made by the representatives of Colombia and New Zealand.

12. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft resolution A/C.2/47/L.92, as orally corrected and revised, without a vote (see para. 17).

13. After the adoption of the draft resolution, statements were made by the representatives of the United States of America, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (on behalf of the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the European Community), Pakistan (on behalf of

the States Members of the United Nations that are members of the Group of 77) and China.

B. Draft decision A/C.2/47/L.56

14. At its 48th meeting, on 7 December, the Committee had before it a draft decision submitted by the Chairman of the Committee, entitled "Implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children" (A/C.2/47/L.56).

15. At the same meeting, the Committee adopted draft decision A/C.2/47/L.56, without a vote (see para. 18, draft decision I).

C. Document relating to operational activities for development

16. At its 51st meeting, on 16 December, on the proposal of the Chairman, the Committee decided to recommend to the General Assembly that it take note of the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women, on which no draft proposals had been submitted (see para. 18, draft decision II).

III. RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE SECOND COMMITTEE

17. The Second Committee recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft resolution:

Triennial policy review of the operational activities of the United Nations development system

The General Assembly,

Recalling its resolutions 44/211 of 22 December 1989 and 46/219 of 20 December 1991 and other relevant resolutions,

Concerned that the full and coordinated implementation of resolution 44/211 has not been achieved by the United Nations system,

Noting with concern that, while some progress has been made in implementing parts of its resolution 44/211, both by individual organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system and by coordination mechanisms of the system, many of the principles contained in that resolution have still to be implemented,

Urging developed countries, in particular those countries whose overall performance is not commensurate with their capacity, taking into account established official development assistance targets, including targets

established at the Second United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries and current levels of contribution, to increase substantially their official development assistance, including contributions to the operational activities of the United Nations system,

Stressing that national plans and priorities constitute the only viable frame of reference for the national programming of operational activities for development of the United Nations system,

Stressing also that the fundamental characteristic of the operational activities of the United Nations system should be, inter alia, their universal, voluntary and grant nature, neutrality and multilateralism, and the ability to respond to the needs of the developing countries in a flexible manner, and that the operational activities of the United Nations system are carried out for the benefit of the developing countries, at the request of those countries and in accordance with their own policies and priorities for development,

Reaffirming further that the United Nations development system has a critical and unique role to play in enabling developing countries to take a lead role in the management of their own development process,

Stressing further that, in order to achieve the objective set out above, processes and procedures of the United Nations system should be streamlined and rationalized, especially in the interrelated areas of programming, execution, decentralization, monitoring and evaluation, thus making the United Nations system more relevant and responsive to the national plans, priorities and objectives of developing countries, and more efficient in its delivery systems,

Emphasizing the importance it attaches to a more effective and coherent coordinated approach by the United Nations system to the needs of recipient countries, particularly at the field level,

1. Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on the triennial comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system; 8/

2. Reaffirms its resolution 44/211 and stresses the need to implement all the elements of that resolution in a coherent manner, keeping in mind their interlinkages;

3. Stresses the need for a substantial increase in resources for operational activities for development on a predictable, continuous and assured basis, commensurate with the increasing needs of developing countries;

8/ A/47/419 and Add.1-3.

4. Reaffirms the need for priority allocation of scarce grant resources to programmes and projects in low-income countries, particularly the least developed countries;

5. Stresses the need for an overall improvement of the effectiveness and efficiency of the United Nations development system in delivering its assistance;

6. Stresses further that, in the context of the administrative reform of the United Nations Secretariat and the restructuring and revitalization of the intergovernmental process, the mandates of the separate sectoral and specialized entities, funds, programmes and specialized agencies should be respected and enhanced, taking into account their complementarities;

7. Emphasizes that the recipient Government has the primary responsibility for coordinating, on the basis of national strategies and priorities, all types of external assistance, including that provided by multilateral organizations, in order effectively to integrate the assistance into its development process;

8. Reaffirms that the multisectoral, sectoral and/or subsectoral strategies prepared by the recipient countries, on the basis of priorities identified by them, should provide a coherent and coordinated programme framework for all external assistance;

9. Stresses that, on the basis of the priorities and plans of recipient countries, and in order to ensure the effective integration of assistance provided by the United Nations system into the development process of countries, with enhanced accountability, and to facilitate the assessment and evaluation of the impact and sustainability of that assistance, a country strategy note should be formulated by interested recipient Governments with the assistance of and in cooperation with the United Nations system under the leadership of the resident coordinator in all recipient countries where the Government so chooses, taking into account the following:

(a) The country strategy note should outline the contribution the United Nations development system could make to respond to the requirements identified by recipient countries in their plans, strategies and priorities;

(b) The contribution of the United Nations system to the country strategy note should be formulated under the leadership of the resident coordinator, in order to promote greater coordination and cooperation at the field level;

(c) The country strategy note should be transmitted to the governing body of each funding organization as a reference for the consideration of its specific country programme;

(d) The specific activities of each funding organization of the United Nations system, within the broad framework of the country strategy note,

should be outlined in a specific country programme prepared by the recipient Government with the assistance of the funding organizations;

10. Reaffirms that, within the context of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, the funding organizations of the United Nations system, the United Nations Development Programme, the United Nations Children's Fund, the United Nations Population Fund, the World Food Programme and the International Fund for Agricultural Development and the funds administered by the United Nations Development Programme should harmonize their cycles and, where appropriate, adapt them to national budget cycles, plans and strategies;

11. Decides that assistance should be based on an agreed division of responsibility among the funding organizations, under the coordination of the Government, in order to integrate their response into the development needs of recipient countries;

12. Takes note of decision 92/23 of 26 May 1992 9/ and of all other relevant decisions of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme regarding the programme approach;

13. Requests the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of the programme approach, including an effective methodology for evaluation, to be applied by the United Nations system, with due regard to country-specific circumstances, and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993;

14. Requests the Economic and Social Council to examine the above-mentioned report at its substantive session of 1993 and to evaluate whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations development system;

15. Reiterates that national execution should be the norm for programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system, taking into account the needs and capacities of recipient countries;

16. Also reiterates the principal responsibility of recipient countries in determining their capacity to execute programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system;

17. Stresses the need for the United Nations system to strengthen its capacity to provide policy and technical support and advice at the request of recipient countries;

18. Also stresses the urgent need for the United Nations system to give increased priority to assisting recipient countries in building and/or

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9/ See Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1992, Supplement No. 8 (E/1992/28), annex I.

enhancing the necessary capacity to undertake national execution, including the provision of support services, as required, at the field level;

19. Recognizes the important role of the specialized agencies of the United Nations system within their specific areas of competence and the need for a clear division of labour in facilitating and providing the necessary technical and substantive expertise for programmes and projects supported by the United Nations system;

20. Requests the Economic and Social Council, through the Commission on Science and Technology for Development at its session in 1993, to consider the report by the Secretary-General on the comprehensive policy review of operational activities of the United Nations system as a means to examine the contribution of the operational activities of the United Nations system to the enhancement of the national capacities of developing countries in the field of science and technology, and to make appropriate recommendations thereon;

21. Takes note of decision 92/22 of 26 May 1992 9/ and of all other relevant decisions of the Governing Council of the United Nations Development Programme regarding the definition of programme/project execution and implementation concepts;

22. Requests the Secretary-General to promote an early agreement on a common interpretation of national execution to be applied by the United Nations system and to report thereon to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993;

23. Also requests the Economic and Social Council to examine the above-mentioned report at its substantive session of 1993, and to evaluate whether effective and coordinated actions are being taken on the matter by the United Nations development system;

24. Decides that, in order to enhance the coherence in programming and resource utilization, programme development and component approval, capacity and authority should be further decentralized to the field offices, providing them with the necessary technical and substantive expertise;

25. Urges strongly, in this context, that governing bodies of all funds, programmes and specialized agencies should ensure that the prescribed limits on field level authority for cancelling, modifying and adding activities within approved programmes and shifting resources within approved budget lines of individual components of a programme and among components of a programme, with the approval of national authorities, should be expanded to become equal and uniform, to the maximum extent possible, in the context of enhanced accountability;

26. Stresses that the United Nations system should use, to the fullest extent possible, available national expertise and indigenous technologies;

27. Stresses also that the procurement of expertise and equipment and the placing of fellowships should be decentralized to the country level to the maximum extent possible to avoid delays, reflect national needs and ensure cost-effectiveness, and stresses further that, in this context, the procurement of expertise and equipment should be decentralized, with due regard to the principles of international competitive bidding, while acknowledging the commitment to increase procurement from developing countries substantially and the need for effective accountability mechanisms;

28. Acknowledges the commitment to procurement from underutilized major donor countries in accordance with the principles of international competitive bidding;

29. Stresses that common formats, rules and procedures are critical to meet the requirements of the shift to a programme approach, and that all formats, rules and procedures and periodicity of reports should be simplified and harmonized to promote national capacity-building, so as to assist the Government to integrate external assistance from different sources into its development process;

30. Decides that the financial and programme auditing capacity and accounting systems of recipient Governments should be strengthened, with assistance from the United Nations system, as requested by Governments;

31. Decides also that, within the context of the programme approach, formats designed for programme, programme component and project development, monitoring and evaluation should take into account interrelated and cross-sectoral linkages between individual strategies of recipient countries and between the individual components of a strategy;

32. Decides further that budgeting and related rules, procedures, processes and formats should be redefined to become, within the context of the sustainability of United Nations system supported programmes and their components and projects, output-, impact- or performance-oriented rather than input- or supply-oriented, and that, accordingly, evaluation and monitoring systems should be reoriented, while also strengthening the use of evaluation and monitoring findings, thereby creating a feedback system;

33. Requests inter-agency coordination mechanisms, in particular the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, to give priority to simplifying, harmonizing and increasing the transparency of their procedures relating to programme component and project formulation, appraisal, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, taking into account the need to focus on the impact and sustainability of projects and programmes and to reach agreement on a common United Nations system-wide manual for such procedures by 1 July 1994;

34. Further requests the members of inter-agency coordination mechanisms, in particular the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, to put in place as soon as possible, and no later than 1 January 1995, measures to enhance accountability at the field level, including effective harmonized programme monitoring, evaluation and management audit systems;

35. Stresses the need for funds and programmes to take into account the decisions of the General Assembly on auditing standards;

36. Stresses that the strengthened resident coordinator function is necessary to assist the Government in mobilizing technical expertise from both inside and outside the United Nations system and ensuring coordination at the country level through, inter alia, the country strategy note, in order to respond to national needs and priorities in the most cost-effective and efficient manner and to maximize the impact of the United Nations system on the development process;

37. Stresses further that, in order to achieve the objective set out above, particular attention should be paid in the selection of the resident coordinators to quality, relevant wide development experience, managerial and team-building skills, and the capacity to integrate individual components and strategies into the overall development process of the country, as well as to develop effective and coherent coordination by the United Nations system as a whole;

38. Emphasizes that an effectively functioning resident coordinator system will be dependent on a number of factors, including the following:

(a) The separate funds, programmes and specialized agencies must make a commitment to work together to integrate assistance provided by the United Nations system into the development process of the recipient countries in a fully coordinated manner;

(b) The United Nations system at the country level should be tailored, taking into account the views of the recipient Government, to the country's specific developmental needs in such a way that they correspond to ongoing and projected cooperation programmes rather than to the institutional structure of the United Nations;

(c) The separate identities and, where appropriate, representation of funds and programmes at the country level should be ensured in the framework of a clear and improved division of labour, in accordance with their mandates;

(d) The resident coordinator should, if required, establish close cooperation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies at the regional and subregional level, in order to respond to specific requests by recipient Governments;

(e) In strengthening the resident coordinator system, the creation of an additional bureaucratic layer should be avoided;

39. Requests the Secretary-General, with due regard to General Assembly resolutions 34/213 of 19 December 1979 and 46/182 of 19 December 1991 and paragraph 38 above, to strengthen the resident coordinator system with the aim of:

(a) Improving the efficiency and effectiveness of the United Nations system at the field level, through a fully coordinated multidisciplinary approach to the needs of recipient countries under the leadership of the resident coordinator, bearing in mind the complementarity of the system and the need for a division of labour within the respective spheres of competence of individual specialized agencies, programmes and funds;

(b) Establishing, in consultation with recipient Governments, a clearer division of responsibilities for the resident coordinator and individual funds, programmes and specialized agencies;

(c) Ensuring that, in the context of the country strategy note, where in place, representatives of the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies at the field level and, in due course, of all funds, programmes and specialized agencies with field operations inform, consult with and take account of any views of the resident coordinator in the context of major programming exercises before reporting to their headquarters on major programming and policy issues;

(d) Widening the pool of qualified development professionals eligible for appointment as United Nations Development Programme resident representatives/resident coordinators to the members of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, together with increased transparency in the selection process;

(e) Encouraging individual specialized agencies at the field level to participate fully in all aspects of the resident coordinator system;

(f) Defining the responsibility of the relevant inter-agency coordination mechanisms, in particular the Joint Consultative Group on Policies, in close consultation with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, for providing clear guidance to resident coordinators and for ensuring that they are provided with the necessary support both at the headquarters level and in the field;

(g) Enhancing the responsibility and authority of the resident coordinator for the planning and coordination of programmes as well as allowing him/her to propose, in full consultation with the Government, to the heads of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies, the amendment of country programmes and major projects and programmes, where required, to bring them into line with the country strategy note;

40. Calls upon resident coordinators to take the necessary steps, in those countries where the scale of the activities of the United Nations and the number of funds, programmes and specialized agencies so justify, to establish, in consultation with host Governments, an appropriate field-level committee, which will normally comprise all resident United Nations system representatives and which, under the leadership of the resident coordinator, will serve as a United Nations coordinating mechanism in the countries concerned;

41. Calls upon the above-mentioned coordinating mechanism, in consultation with the host Government, to undertake advisory functions including, inter alia, the provision of guidance and advice on proposed programmes of funding organizations, the review of agency sector strategies and evaluations and the investigation of specific problems and issues requiring a coordinated response;

42. Welcomes the decision of the Joint Consultative Group on Policies to set a target for increasing the number of common premises, while emphasizing that this should be achieved in cooperation with host Governments in a way that increases efficiency through, inter alia, consolidation of administrative infrastructures of organizations concerned, and does not increase the costs for the United Nations system or for developing countries;

43. Emphasizes the necessity of continuing to develop common innovative and integrated system-wide training programmes, at Headquarters and especially at the field level, while taking into account the use of regional cooperation arrangements, for government officials and other nationals as well as for the staff of the United Nations system field offices to facilitate the shift from the project to the programme approach and to promote effective and innovative execution modalities;

44. Also emphasizes that those training programmes should be joint and common, include on-the-job training, involve the establishment of a training capacity internal to each country, including a scheme for the training of national trainers, and be provided on a continuous basis as an integral function of the United Nations system field office structure;

45. Stresses that those training programmes should aim to develop capacities, especially in the areas of the programme approach, national execution, programme accountability and financial audit, support costs and evaluation and monitoring;

46. Urges the United Nations system to give appropriate attention to establishing and maintaining national institutional expertise, particularly in the areas mentioned in paragraph 45 above, inter alia, through the increased participation of national staff and members of relevant national institutions in training programmes;

47. Reaffirms the importance of human development, including human resources development, and requests the United Nations development system to strengthen the support given by its operational activities, at the request of recipient countries, to sectors vital to human development;

48. Recognizes that the United Nations system has a role to play in assisting countries undergoing deep economic and social reforms;

49. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the operational activities of the United Nations development system carried out in new recipient countries are undertaken from the outset on the basis of an

integrated, unified, cost-effective and innovative approach to development cooperation and presence in the countries concerned and to ensure effective support to them, while ensuring that such support is not to the detriment of existing programmes for developing countries;

50. Stresses the need for the Economic and Social Council to examine the operational activities of the United Nations system with a view to ensuring the implementation of the present resolution and making recommendations thereon;

51. Calls upon the governing bodies of the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system to take appropriate action for the full implementation of the present resolution, and requests the executive heads of those funds, programmes and specialized agencies to submit a yearly progress report to their governing bodies on measures taken and to be taken for its implementation;

52. Requests the Secretary-General to ensure that the provisions of the present resolution are fully implemented by all the organs, organizations and bodies of the United Nations system;

53. Also requests the Secretary-General, after consultations with the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system, to present to the Economic and Social Council at its substantive session of 1993 an appropriate management process containing clear guidelines, targets, benchmarks and time-frames, for the full implementation of the present resolution;

54. Further requests the Secretary-General to submit to the Council at its substantive sessions of 1993 and 1994 a progress report on the implementation of the present resolution, incorporating, inter alia, the reports mentioned in paragraph 51 above, to be prepared by the funds, programmes and specialized agencies of the United Nations system;

55. Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its fiftieth session, through the Economic and Social Council, in the context of the triennial policy review, a comprehensive analysis of the implementation of the present resolution and to make appropriate recommendations.

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18. The Second Committee also recommends to the General Assembly the adoption of the following draft decisions:

DRAFT DECISION I

Implementation of General Assembly resolution 45/217 on the World Summit for Children

The General Assembly, recalling its resolution 45/217 of 21 December 1990 on the World Summit for Children and taking note of the report of the Secretary-General 10/ on the implementation of that resolution, decides to request the Secretary-General to submit an updated report to it at its forty-eighth session for consideration.

DRAFT DECISION II

Report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women

The General Assembly decides to take note of the note by the Secretary-General transmitting the report of the Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme on the activities of the United Nations Development Fund for Women. 11/

10/ A/47/264-E/1992/71.

11/ A/47/340.